

THE BEST SUPERHERO COMIC BOOK IN THE UNIVERSE!



SKYBOUND

83

\$2.99

INVINCIBLE™



RYAN
ROBERT KIRKMAN
RYAN OTTLEY
CLIFF RATHBURN
JOHN RAUCH

image® COMICS PRESENTS

INVINCIBLE™

ROBERT KIRKMAN
WRITER

RYAN OTTLEY
PENCILER, INKER pages 1-7

CLIFF RATHBURN
INKER

JOHN RAUCH
COLORIST

RUS WOOTON
LETTERER

SINA GRACE
EDITOR

COVER BY RYAN OTTLEY & FCO PLASCENCIA
CREATED BY ROBERT KIRKMAN & CORY WALKER

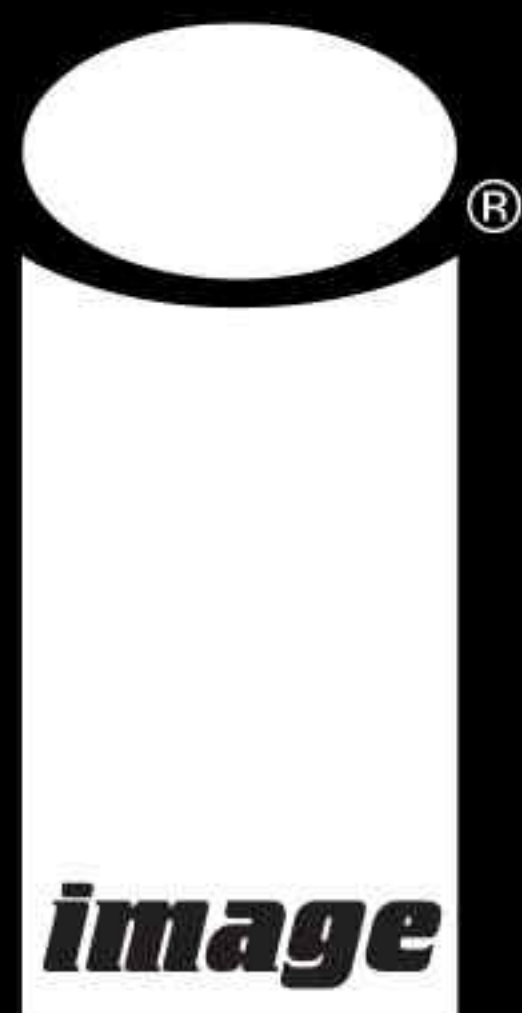


IMAGE COMICS, INC.

Robert Kirkman - chief operating officer
Erik Larsen - chief financial officer
Todd McFarlane - president
Marc Silvestri - chief executive officer
Jim Valentino - vice-president
Eric Stephenson - publisher
Todd Martinez - sales & licensing coordinator
Sarah deLaine - pr & marketing coordinator
Branwyn Bigglestone - accounts manager
Emily Miller - administrative assistant
Jamie Parreno - marketing assistant
Kevin Yuen - digital rights coordinator
Tyler Shainline - production manager
Drew Gill - art director
Jonathan Chan - senior production artist
Monica Garcia - production artist
Vincent Kukua - production artist
Jana Cook - production artist

www.imagecomics.com

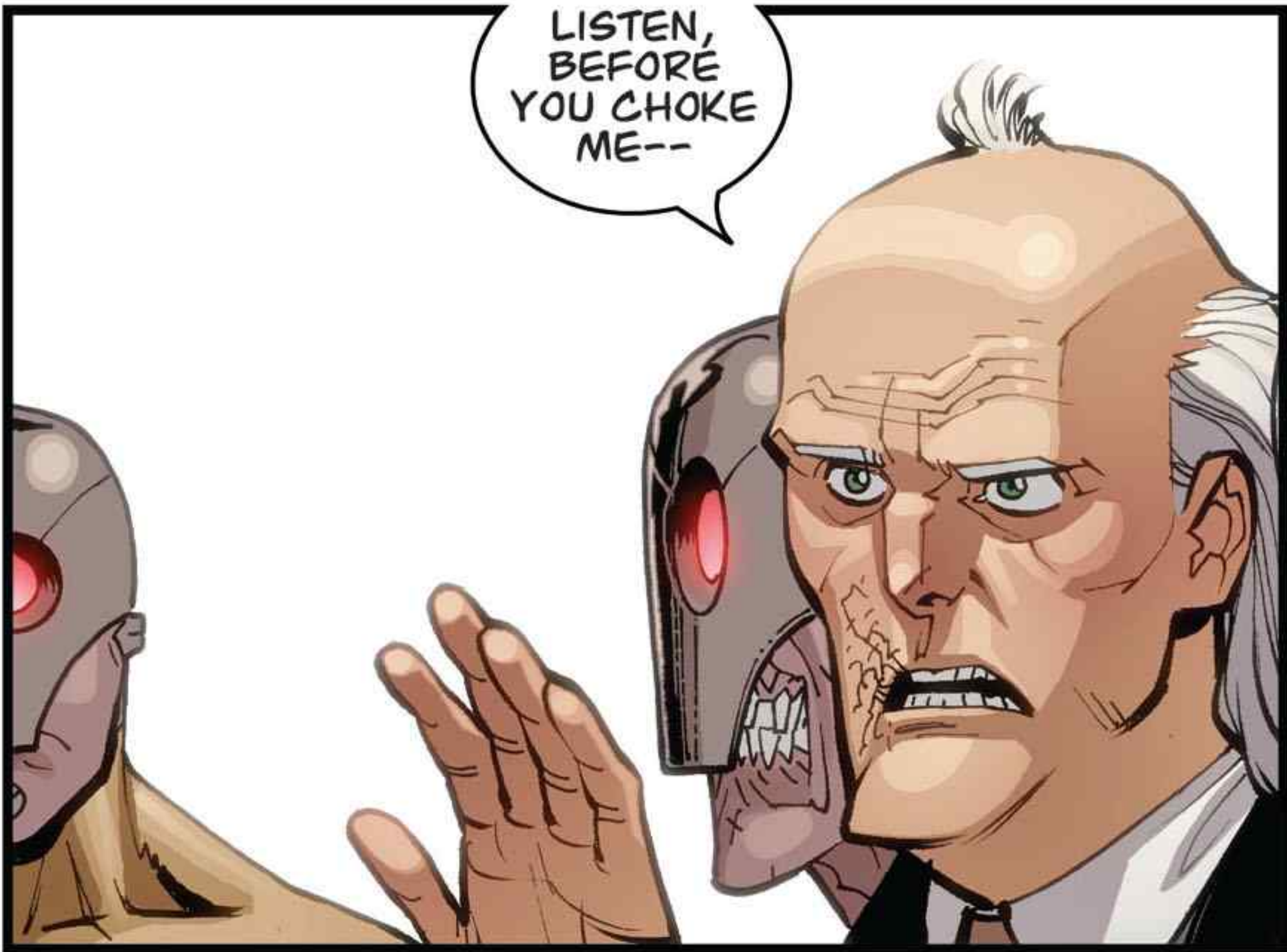


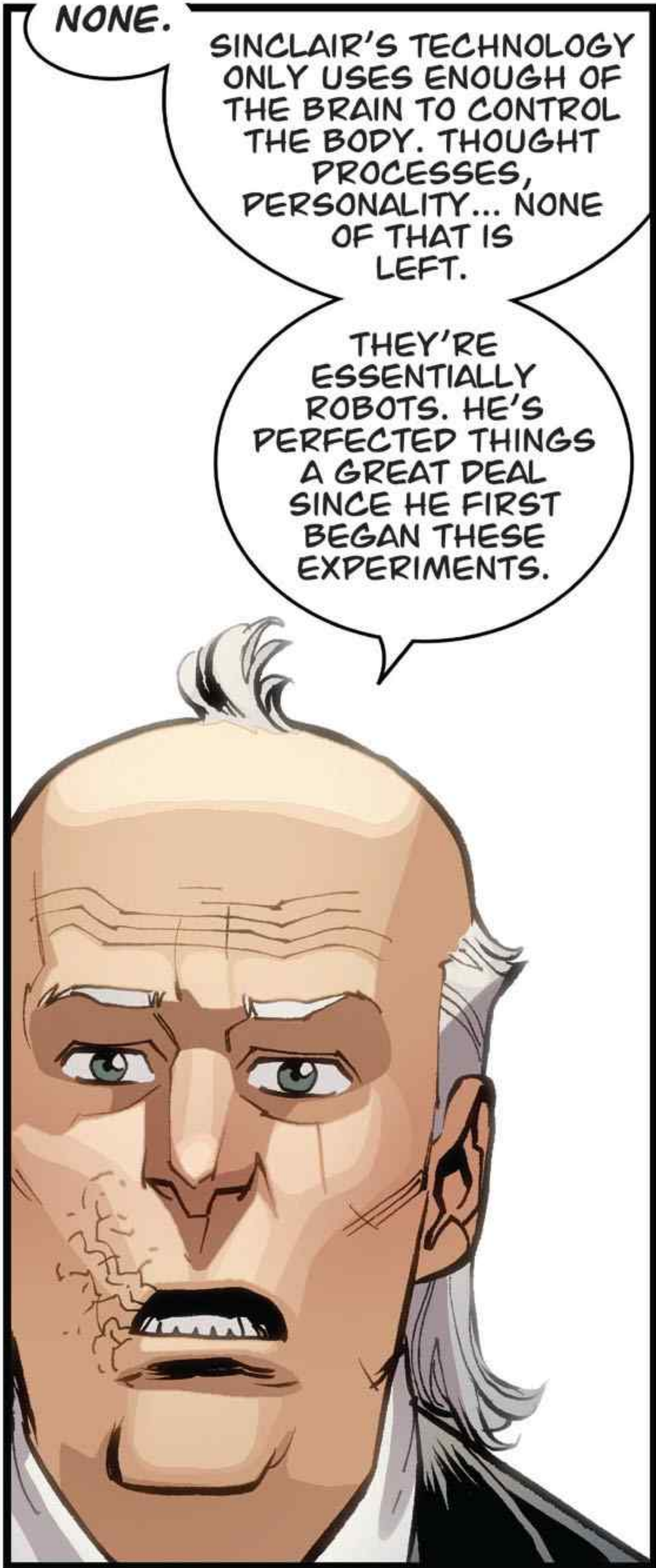
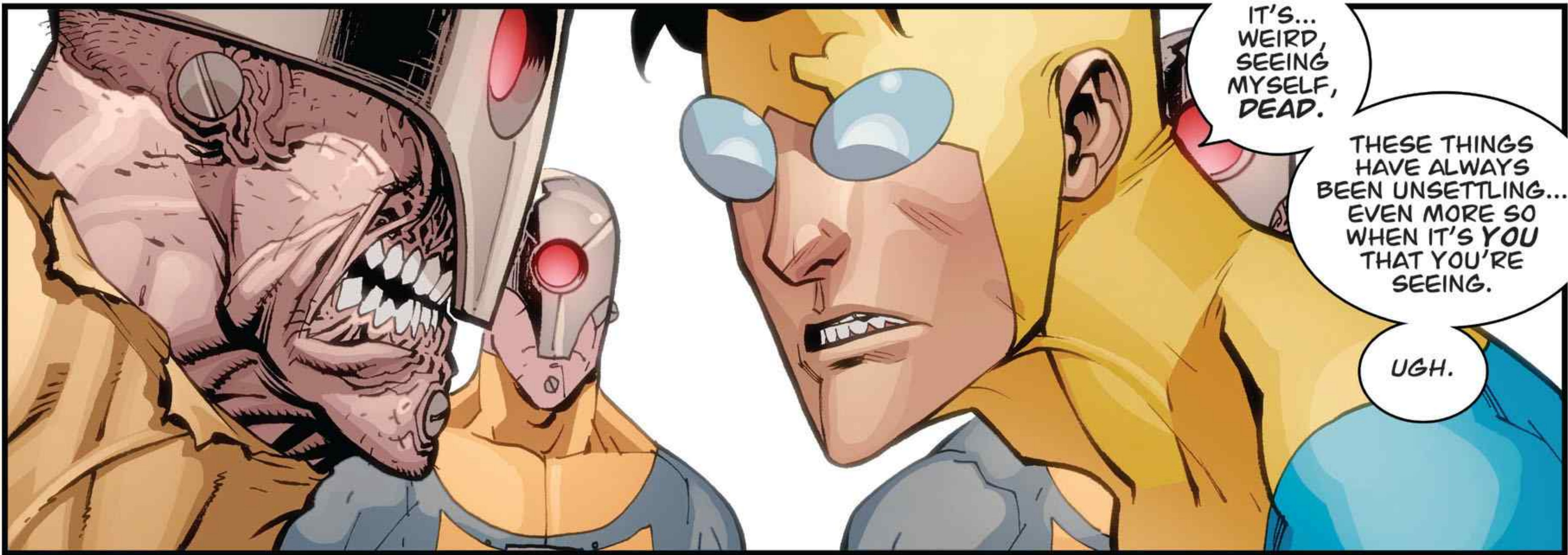
Robert Kirkman - CEO
J.J. Diddle - President
Sina Grace - Editorial Director
Shawn Kirkham - Director of Business Development
Tim Daniel - Digital Content Manager
Chad Manion - Assistant to Mr. Grace
Sydney Pennington - Assistant to Mr. Kirkham
Feldman Public Relations LA - Public Relations

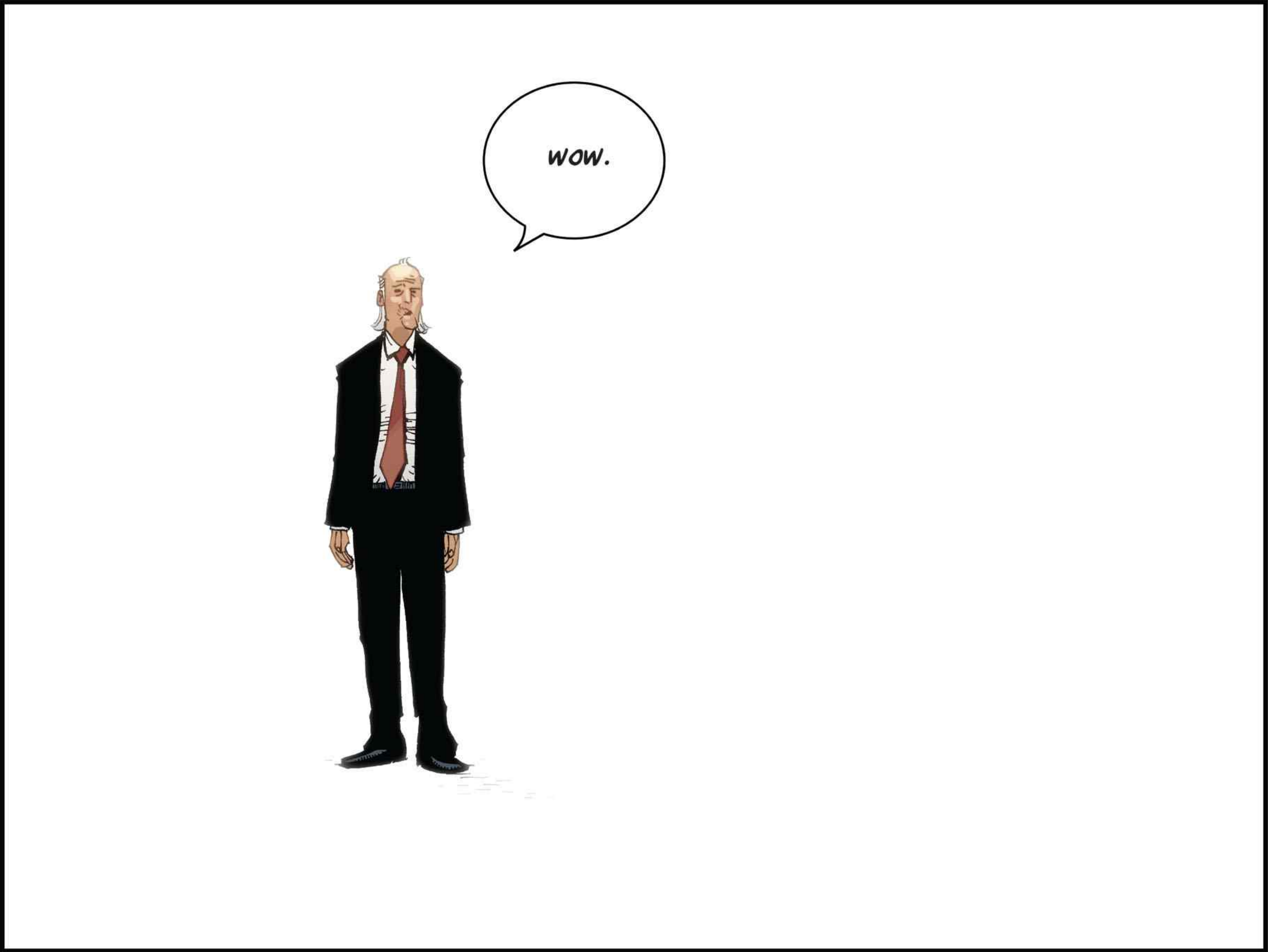
For international rights inquiries,
please contact: sk@skybound.com

www.skybound.com

INVINCIBLE #83. October 2011. Published by Image Comics, Inc. Office of publication: 2134 Allston Way, 2nd Floor, Berkeley, CA 94704. Copyright © 2011 Robert Kirkman & Cory Walker. All rights reserved. INVINCIBLE™ (including all prominent characters featured herein), its logo and all character likenesses are trademarks of Robert Kirkman & Cory Walker, unless otherwise noted. Image Comics® and its logos are registered trademarks and copyrights of Image Comics, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means (except for short excerpts for review purposes) without the express written permission of Image Comics, Inc. All names, characters, events and locales in this publication are entirely fictional. Any resemblance to actual persons (living or dead), events or places, without satiric intent, is coincidental. Printed in the U.S.A. For information regarding the CPSIA on this printed material call: 203-595-3636 and provide reference # EAST - 401683









THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF CRIMINAL MASTERMIND, TITAN.



WE'VE TRIED EVERYTHING, BOSS.

WE'VE TRIED TO GO LEGIT... THAT DIDN'T WORK, WE JUST COULDN'T MAKE ENDS MEET.

WE TRIED TO GO BACK TO CRIME ON OUR OWN--WE COULDN'T HACK IT.

WORKING FOR MACHINE HEAD WAS NO GREAT SHAKES... BUT YOU WERE ONE OF US--A THUG, YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE...

WORKING FOR YOU, IT'S BEEN EASIER. AND WE KNOW WE HAVEN'T BEEN THE MOST USEFUL PARTS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION...



IF YOU'LL ALLOW ME TO INTERRUPT YOUR RAMBLE...

YOU WISH TO PROVE YOUR WORTH. UNDERSTANDABLE. ADMIRABLE. THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT I'M STILL TRYING TO REBUILD MY ORGANIZATION IN THE WAKE OF THE RECENT DEBACLE WITH THE ORDER.*

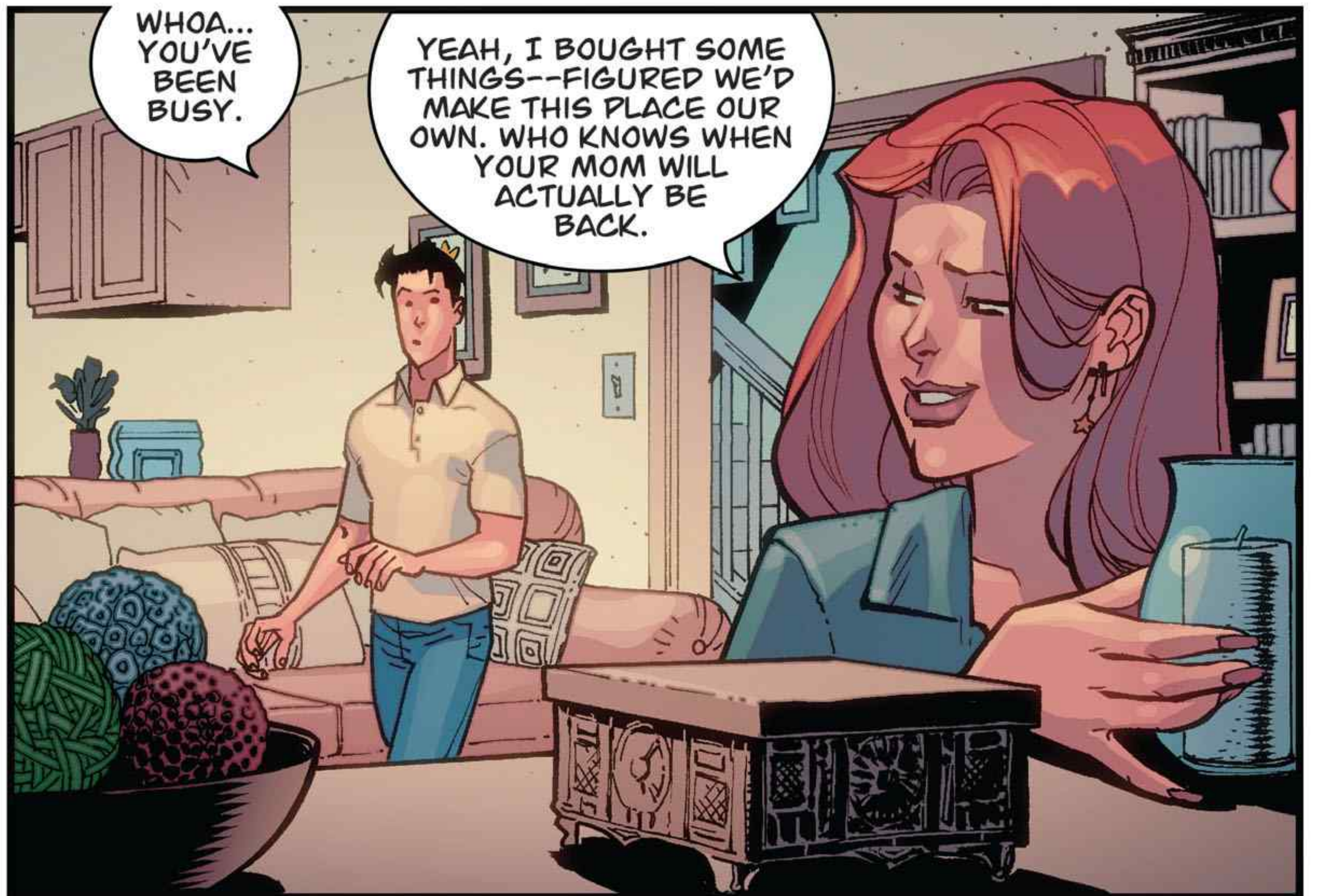
IT'S BROUGHT DOWN A LOT OF HEAT ON ME AND THIS ORGANIZATION.

*SEE GUARDING THE GLOBE, VOLUME I.



SO WHAT I'M SAYING IS, THERE ARE MANY WAYS YOU COULD PROVE VERY VALUABLE TO ME.

WERE YOU WILLING TO TAKE THINGS TO THE NEXT LEVEL... IN FACT, I THINK I KNOW JUST THE TASK WITH WHICH TO PROVE YOURSELVES.



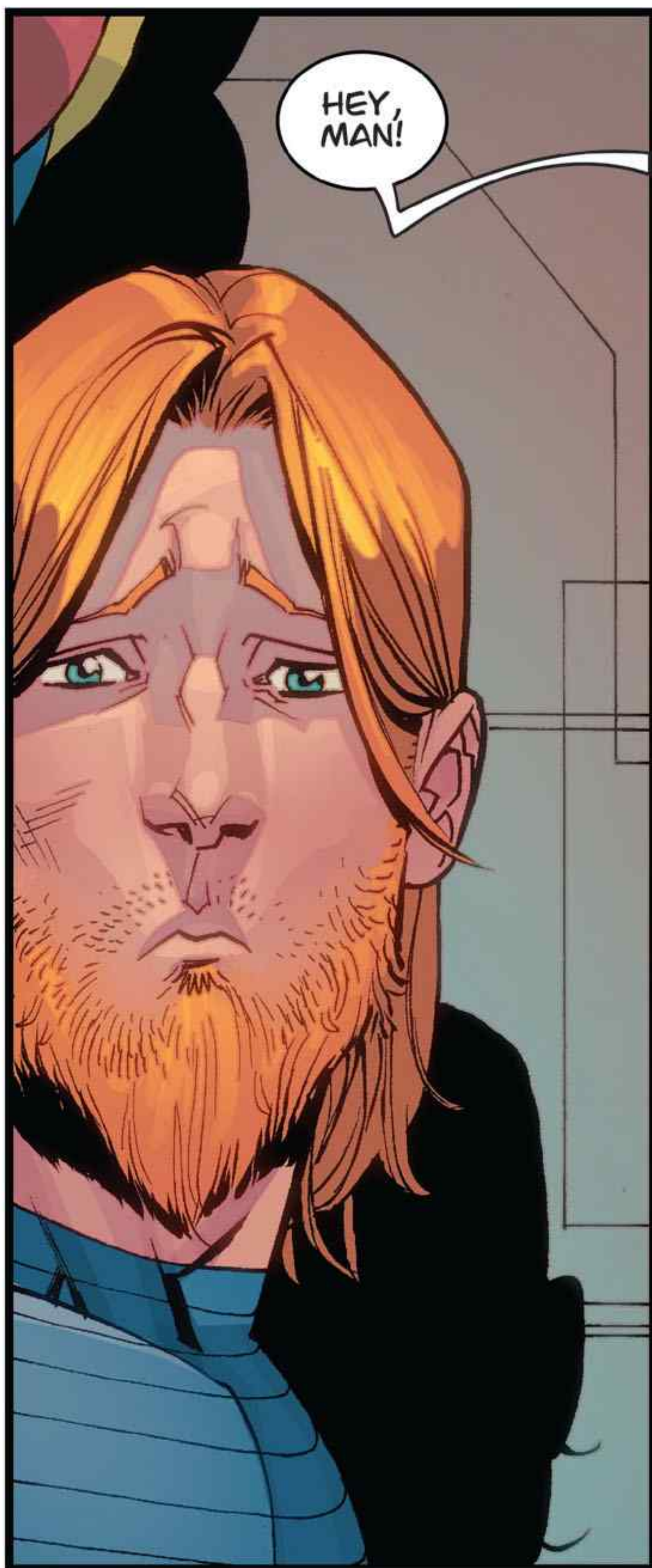


SORRY, REX.
I'M GOING
AFTER MY FIANCE'
BEFORE HE
TACKLES
HER.

THAT'LL GET AT
LEAST ONE GUY
TO GIVE
HER SOME
SPACE...



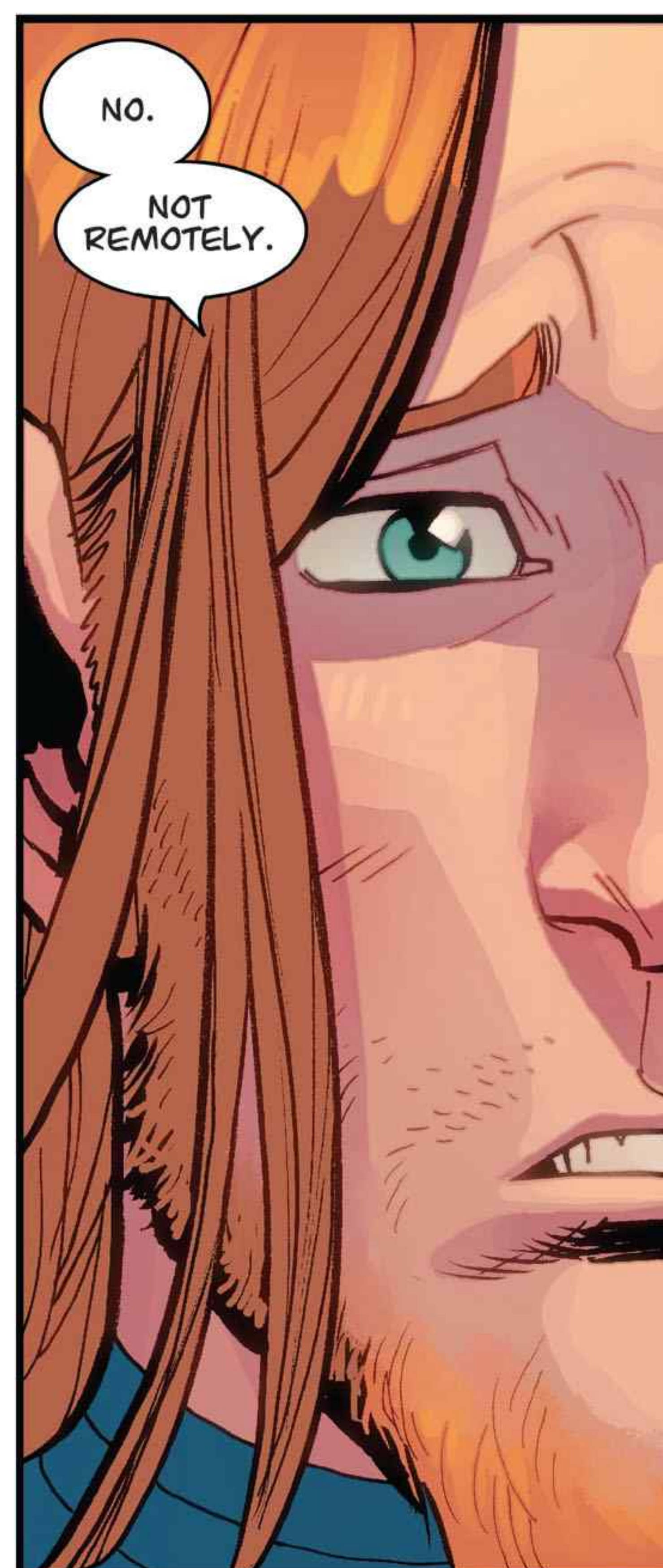
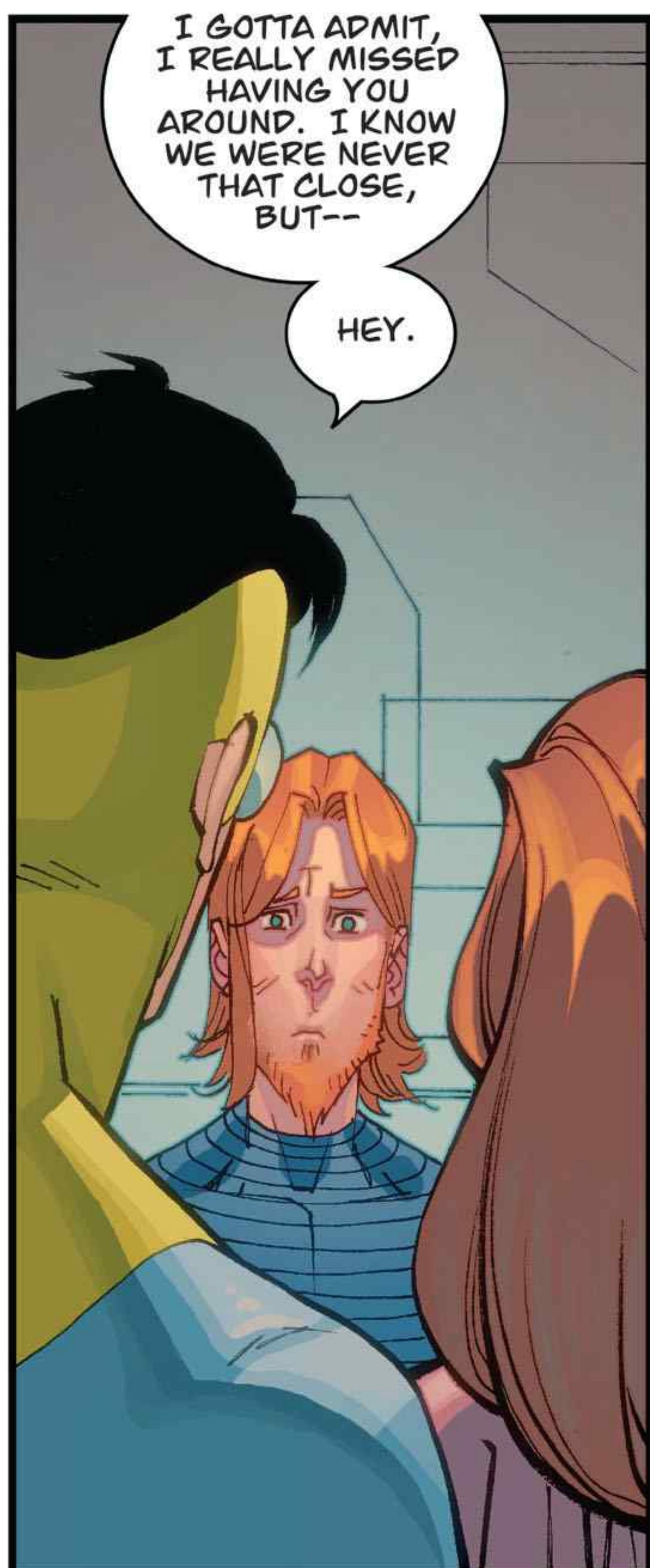
HEY,
MAN!



BYE!

IT'S
GOOD TO
HAVE YOU
BACK.







I'M GOING TO GO STAKE OUT THEIR PLACE--IT'S LIKE A **FORTRESS**. FOR THE RECORD, I'M NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THIS, TITAN REALLY IS ASKING FOR THE MOON... WHY WOULD HE SEND JUST **US**?

TO AVOID RETALIATION. HE WANTS US TO LOOK LIKE ROGUE AGENTS-- LIKE HE'S NOT BEHIND IT. HE DOESN'T THINK WE'LL PULL IT OFF.

BUT WE **WILL**... I'D COME WITH YOU, BUT I REALLY NEED TO SEPARATE-- I'VE BEEN BONDED TOO LONG.

I GET IT, MAN. AT LEAST... CLEAN UP A LITTLE OR SOMETHING WHILE I'M OUT.



HE'S GONE. YEAH. HE KNOWS YOU'RE ALIVE, THOUGH. WE DON'T KEEP SECRETS FROM EACH OTHER.

I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU WON'T TALK TO ME IN FRONT OF HIM--I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE HIM, BUT IT'S NOT LIKE HE'S GOING TO **HEAR** YOU.



I KNOW... BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I **WANT**. I KNOW A PERMANENT BOND WOULD MAKE ME STRONGER-- MAYBE EVEN HELP US PULL THIS OFF, BUT YOU'VE SAID IT WOULD... **TRANSFORM** ME.

I TRUST YOU... WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR YEARS... BUT I JUST DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT.



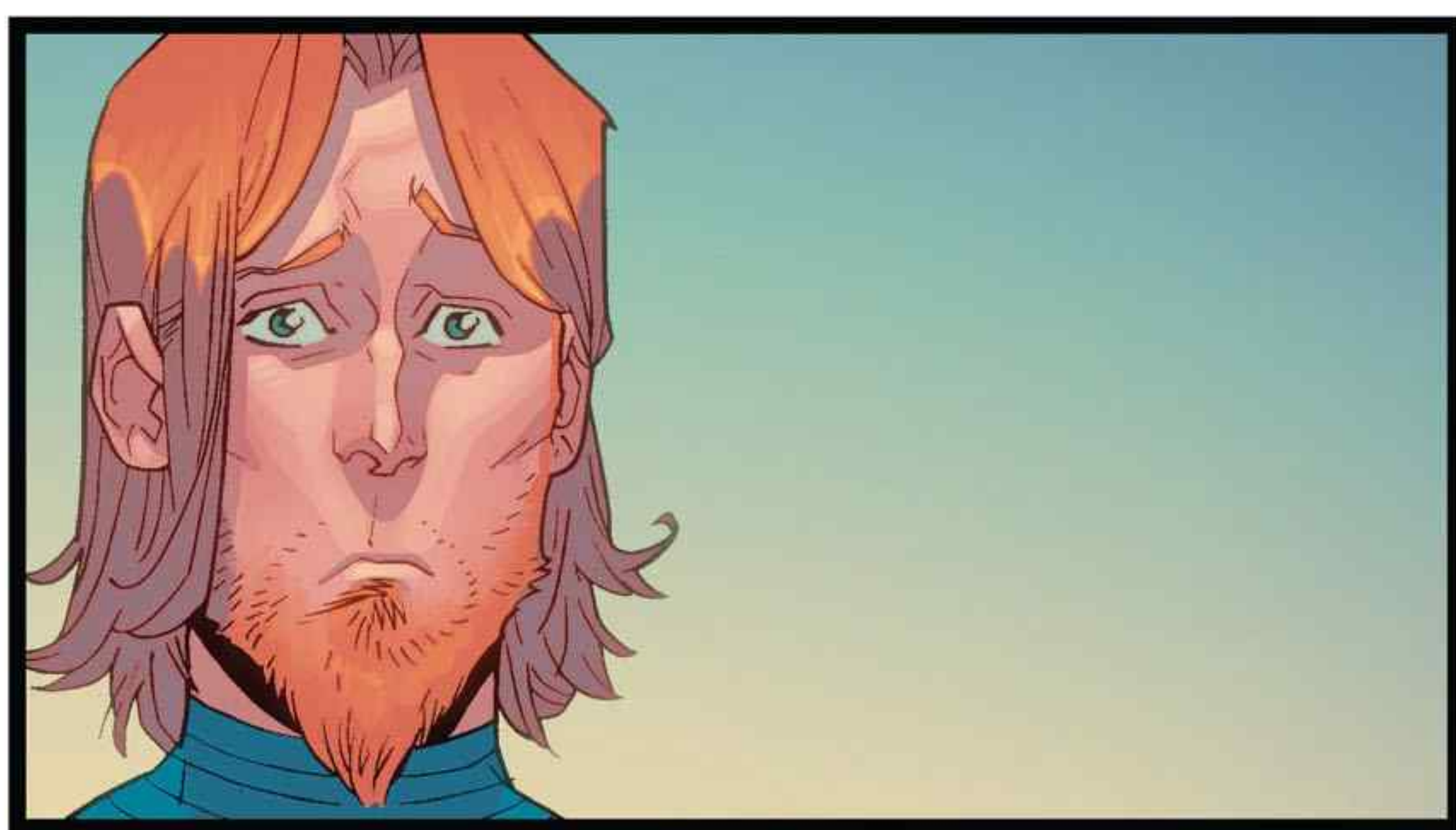
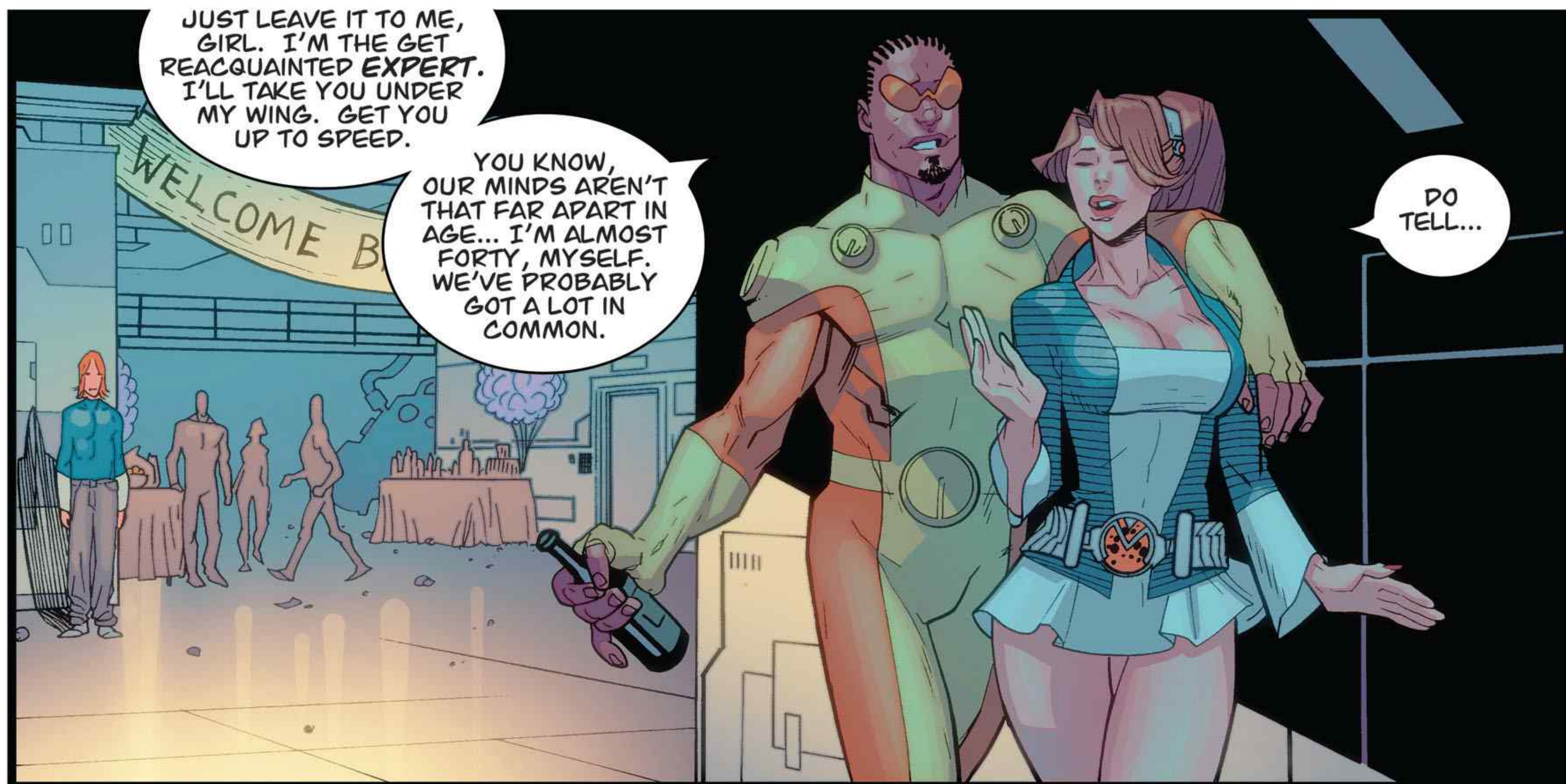
NO, OKAY? I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.

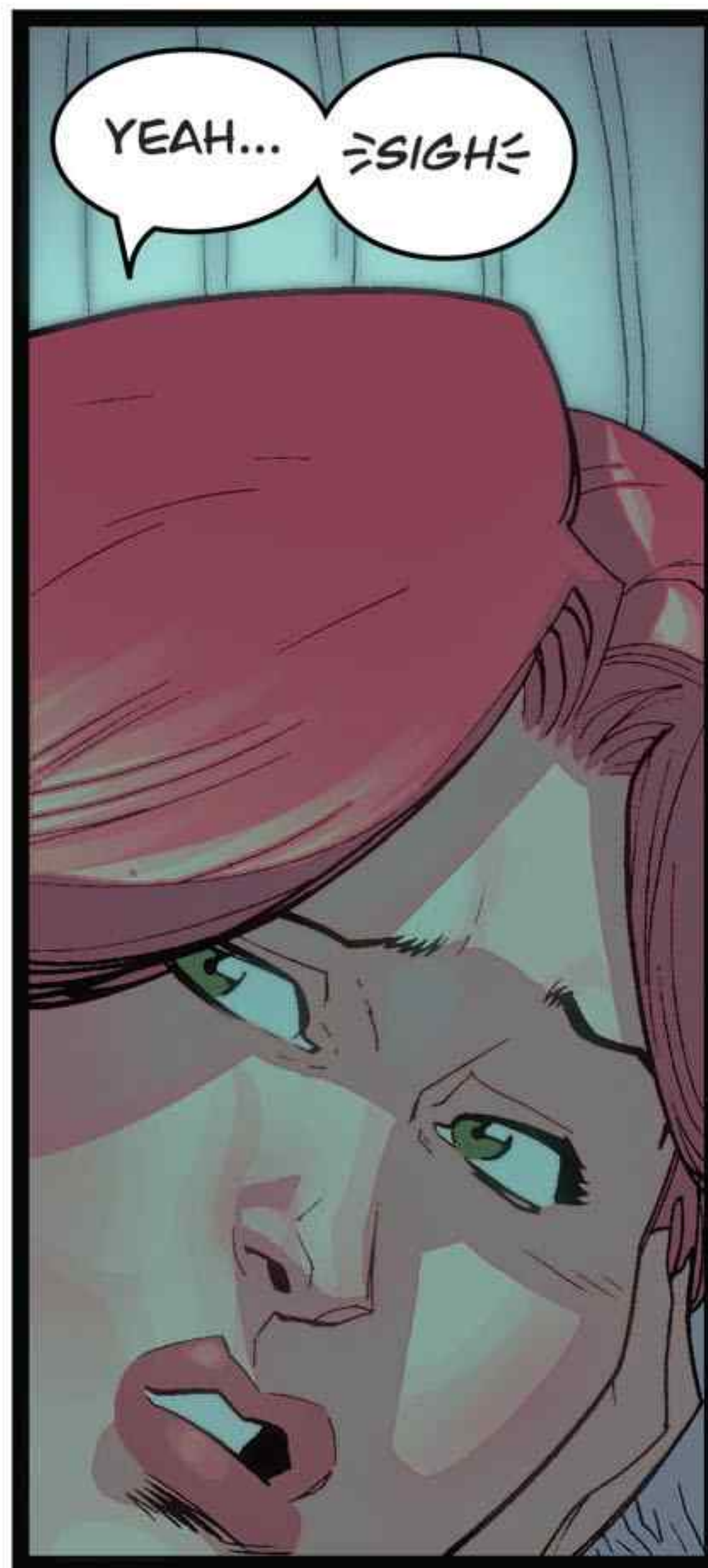
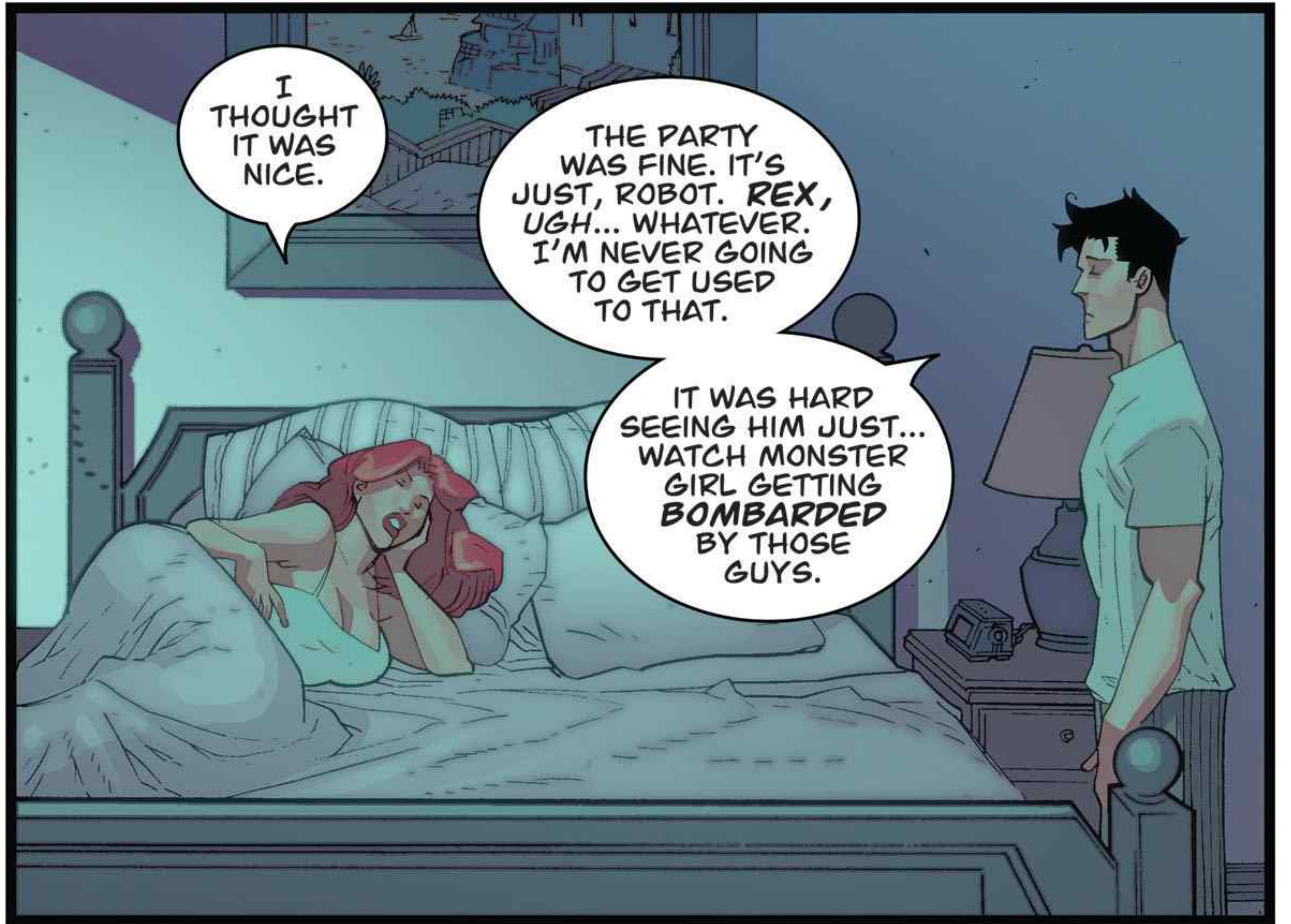
PLEASE... DON'T BRING IT UP AGAIN.



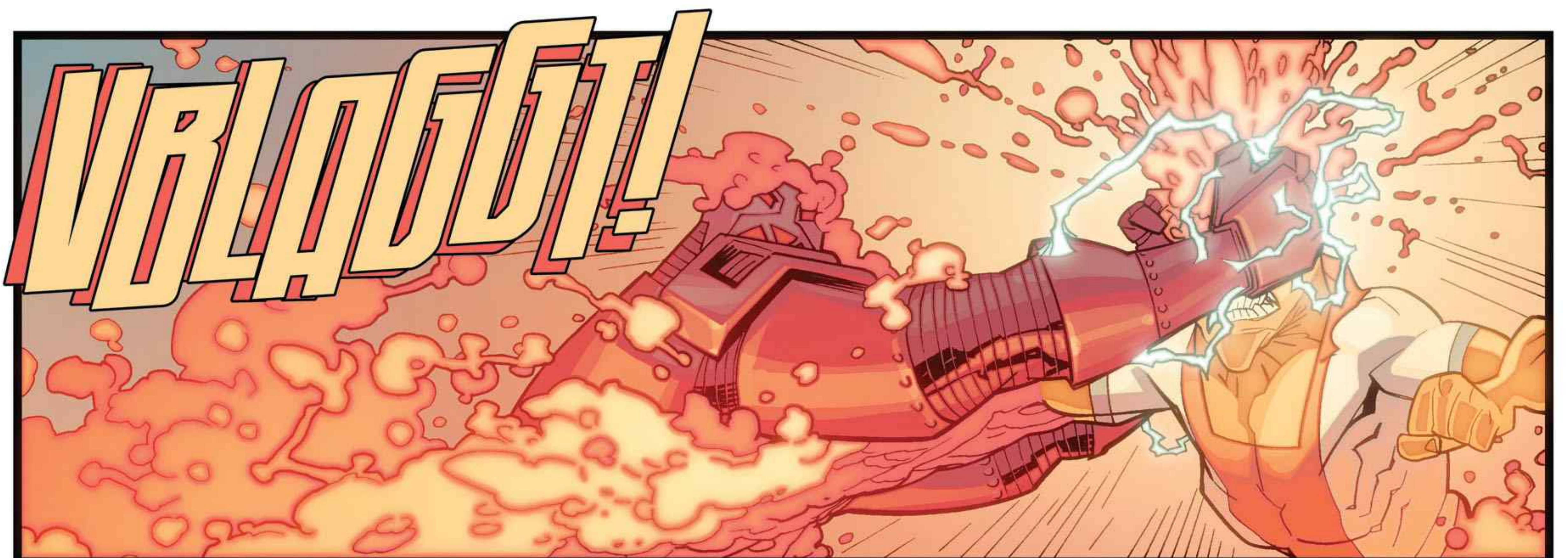
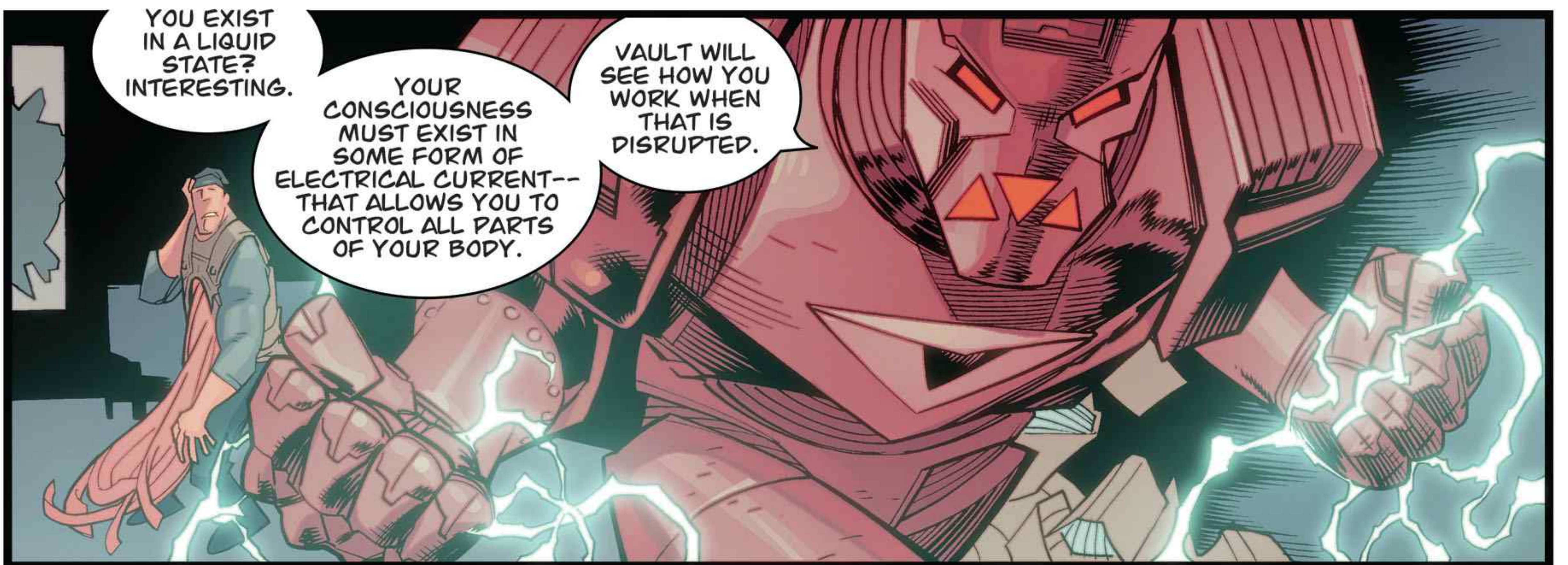
OH, CALM DOWN.

IT'S OKAY-- IT'LL JUST BE FOR A LITTLE WHILE.



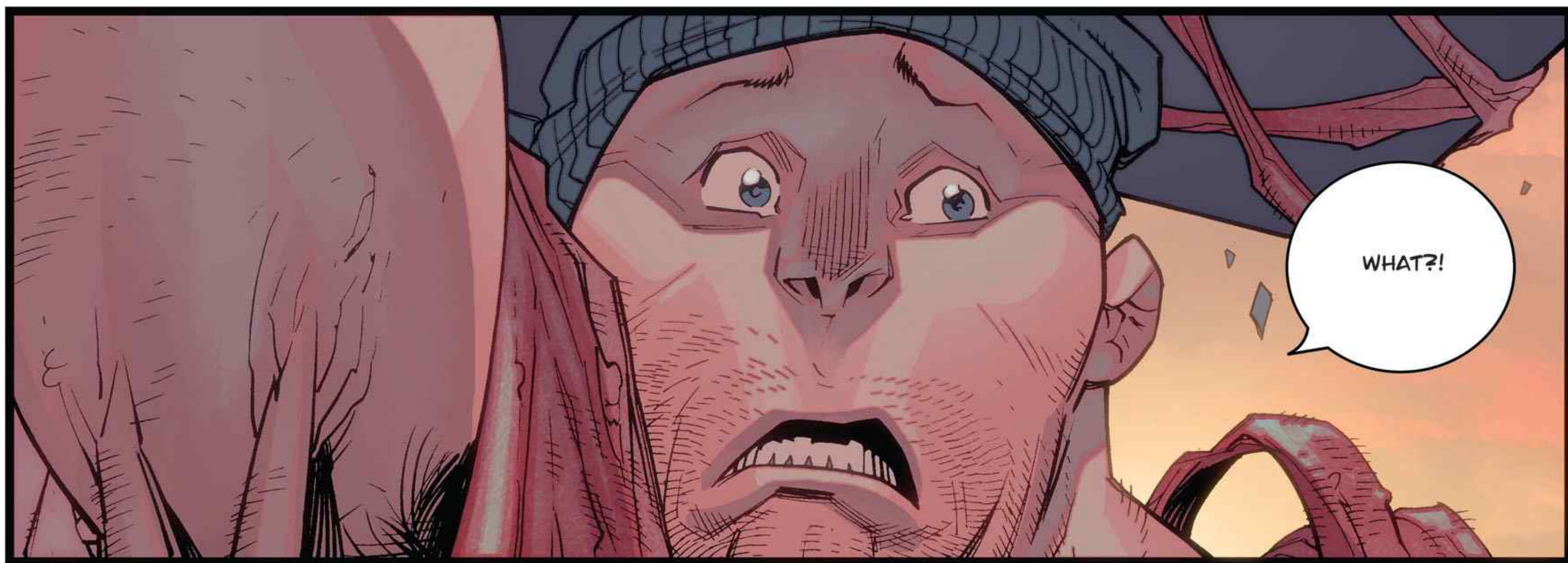




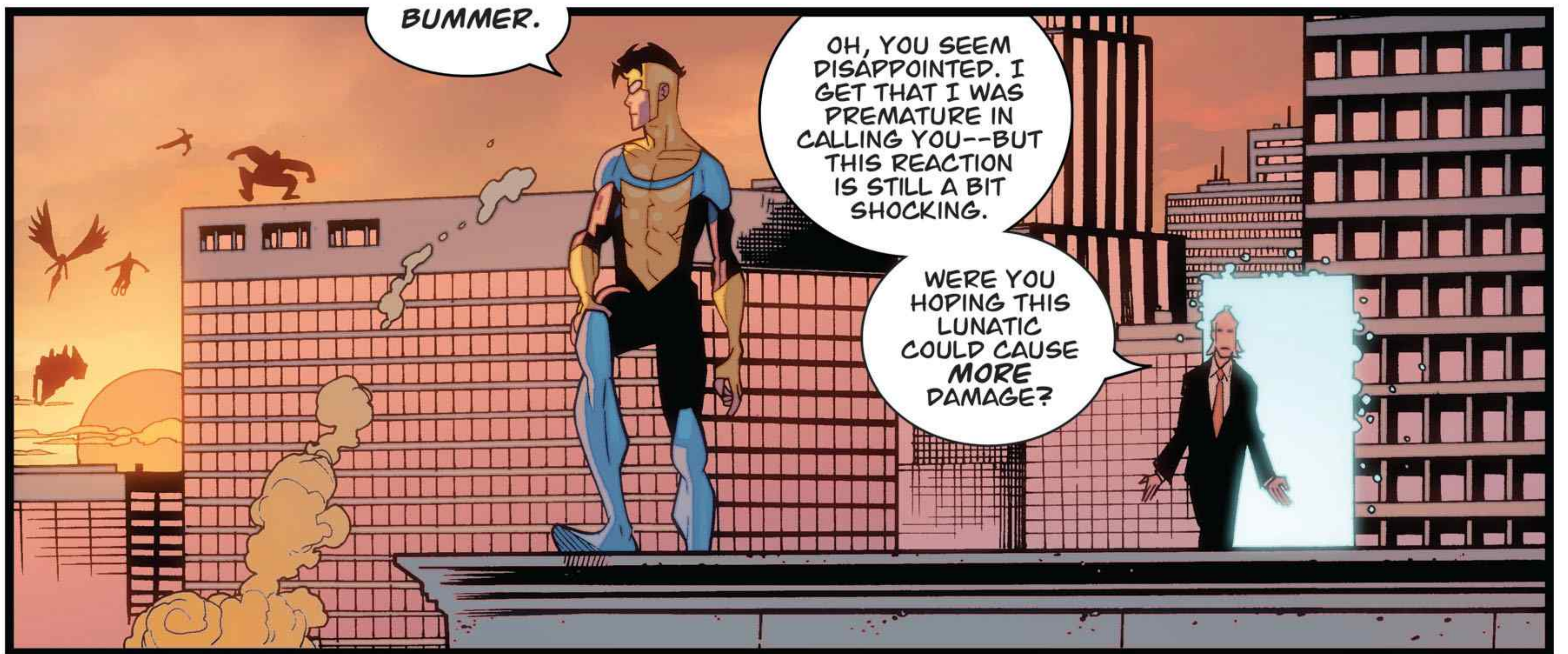












BUMMER.

OH, YOU SEEM DISAPPOINTED. I GET THAT I WAS PREMATURE IN CALLING YOU--BUT THIS REACTION IS STILL A BIT SHOCKING.

WERE YOU HOPING THIS LUNATIC COULD CAUSE MORE DAMAGE?



CRAP, THAT'S NOT IT. IT'S JUST-- I DON'T GET UP THIS EARLY VERY OFTEN... IT'S NOT EVEN SIX YET.

YOU USUALLY IN YOUR SUIT READY TO WORK AT THIS TIME?



I DON'T SLEEP. THAT'S HALF THE REASON I LANDED THIS JOB.

I SIT IN A PUDDLE OF GOO FOR ONE HOUR A DAY, IT KEEPS ME YOUNG.

YOU'RE MAKING THAT UP.

SMART ASS.



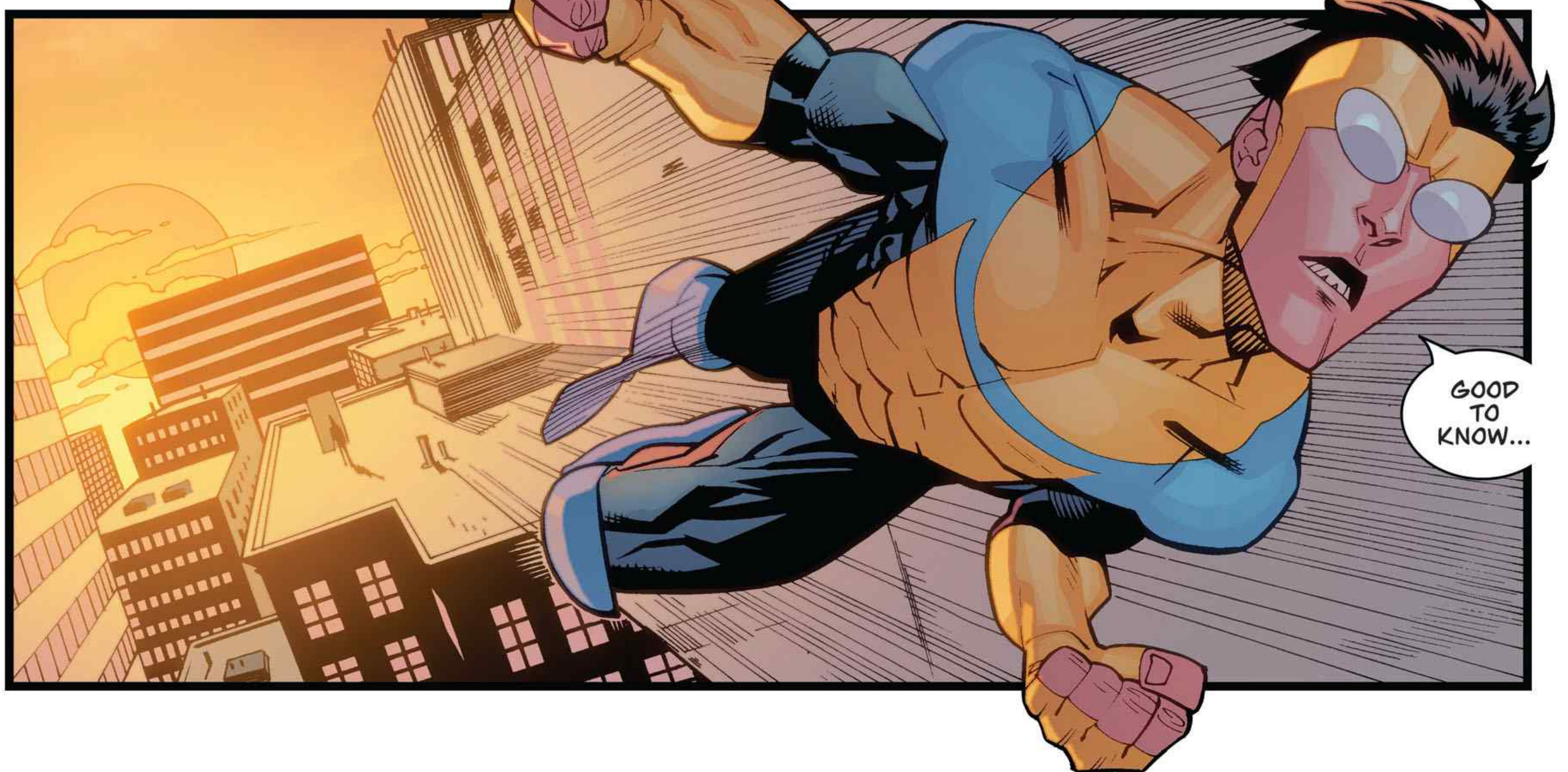
WHATEVER, KID.

SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR BEAUTY SLEEP.

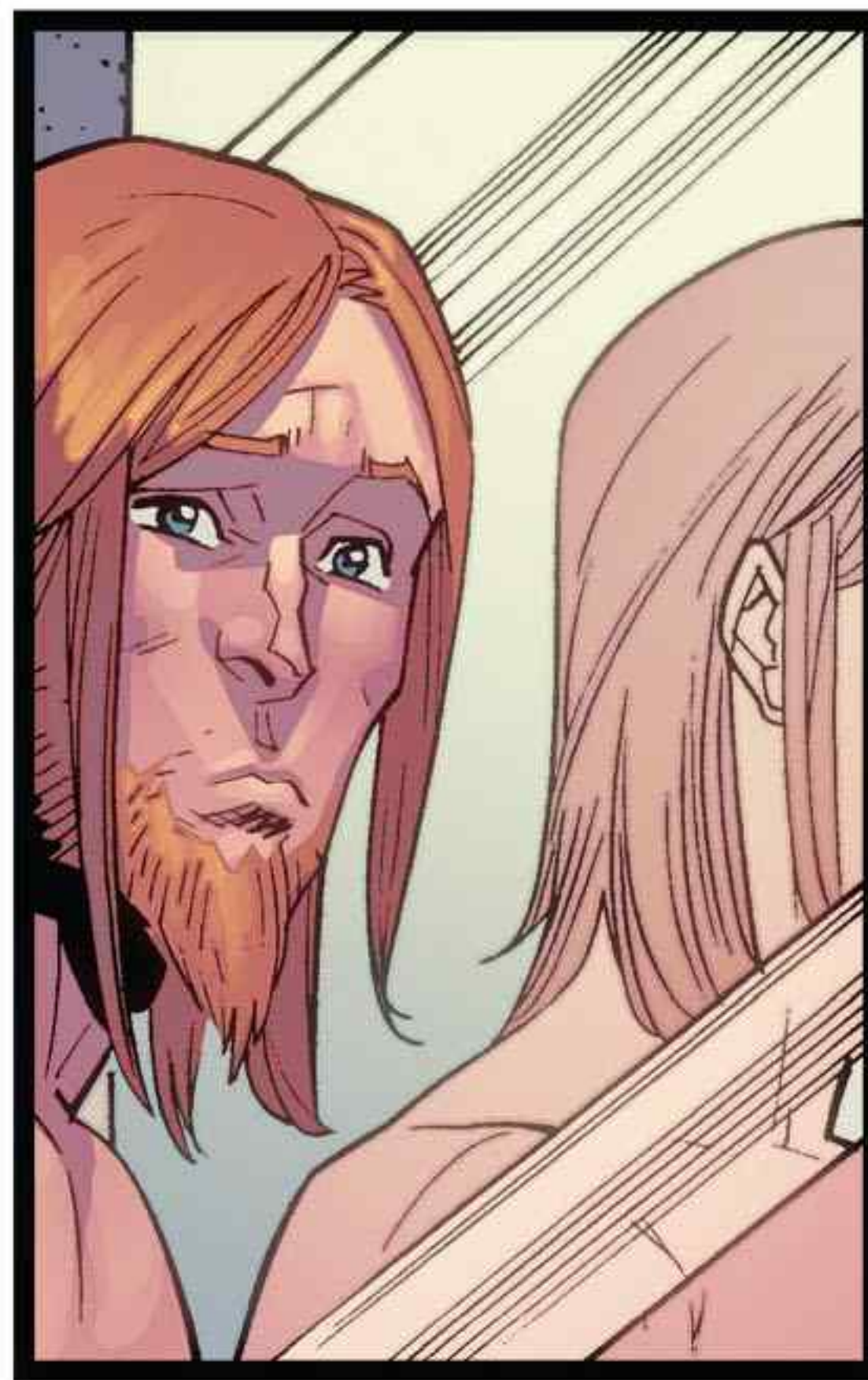
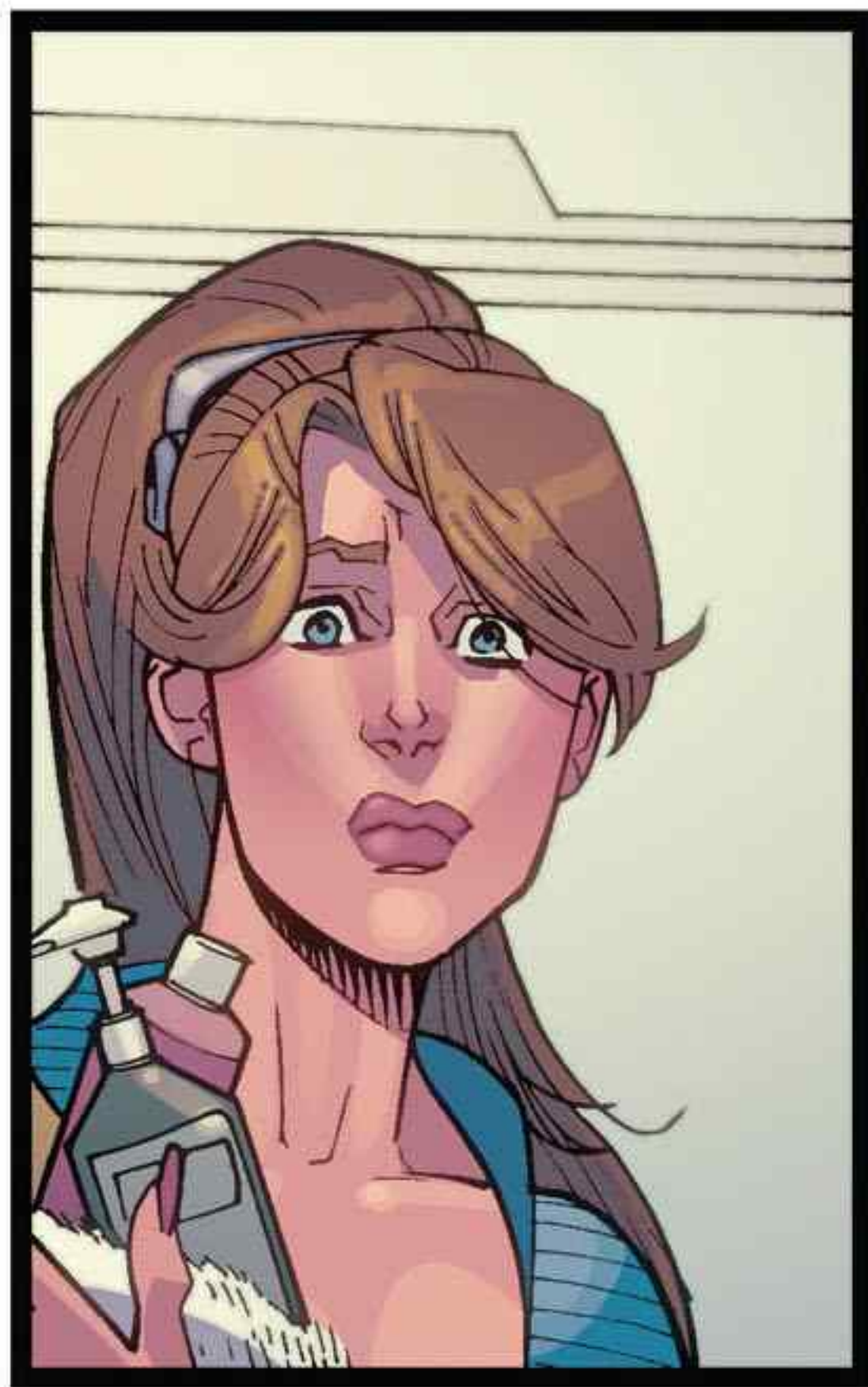
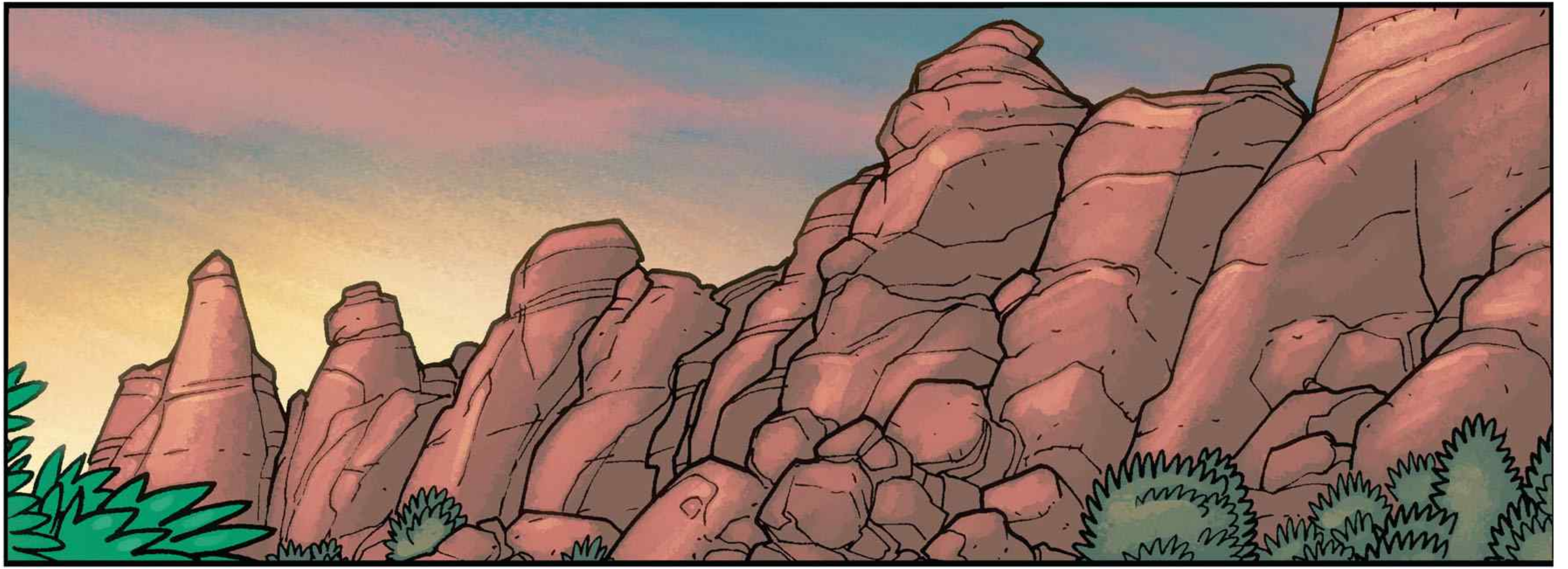


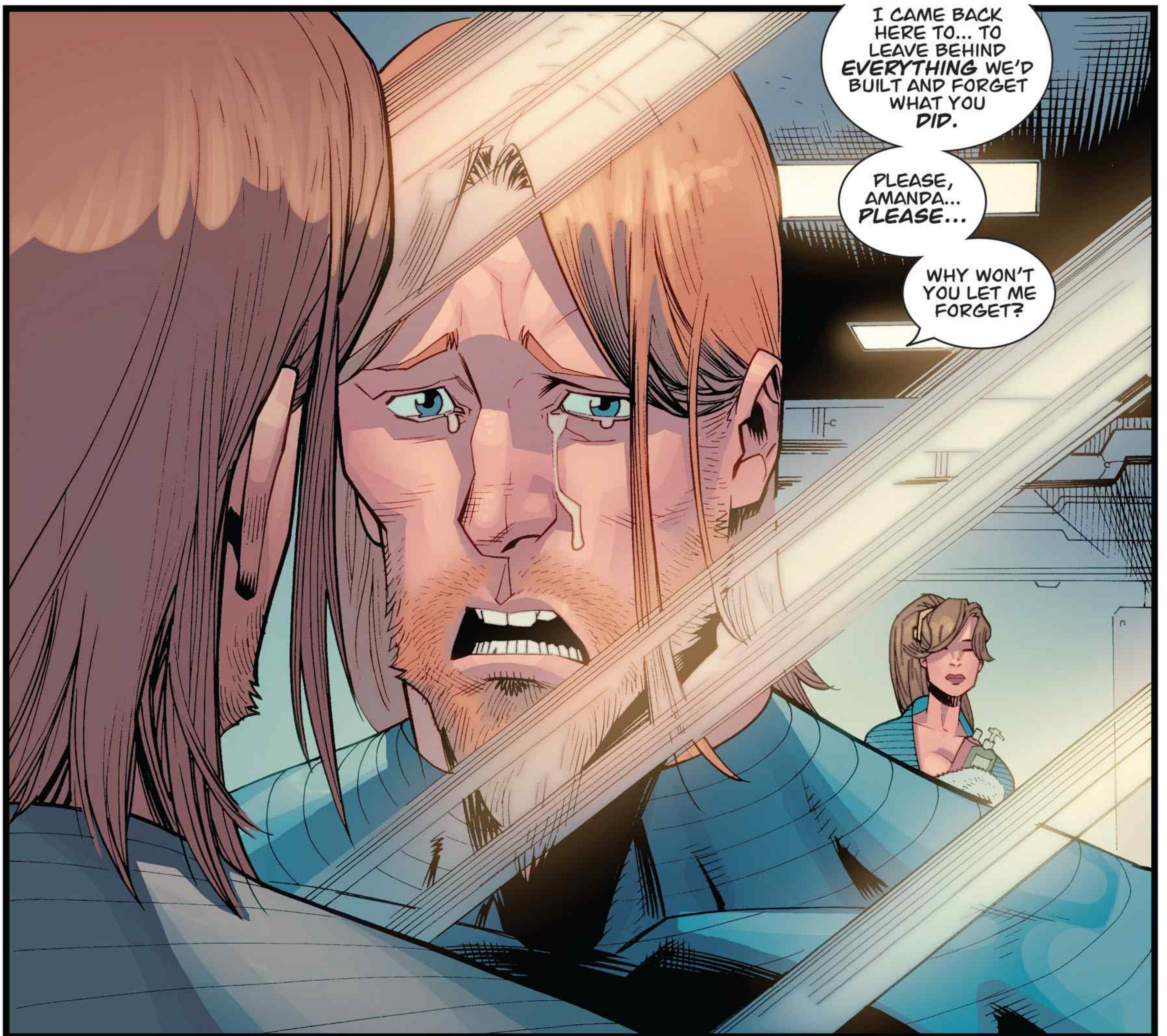
IT'S OKAY.

TURNS OUT, I WASN'T NEEDED. THE GUARDIANS OF THE GLOBE HAD THIS ONE HANDLED...



GOOD TO KNOW...





WRITE US @
INVINCIBLE@FUNKOTRON.COM

INVINCIBLE

What did I tell you, Invincibles,

Hot off the heels of issue 82, another dose of Invincible. I gush often, as you all are aware, but I must gush more: there is seriously some of the best work I have seen from the team.

Just want to interject here. By the time this issue sees print, I'll be writing issue 87, that's right, 87. And Cory will be nearly done with 86, and we'll really be trucking along. The two upcoming issues by the esteemed Mister Walker are really going to help us get this book back on track--and Ryan and I are committed to making this book return to it's former, super regular schedule... so... 2012 should be a good year for Invincible. YAY!

Okay, let's talk to you all now.

Hey Robert,

Love your work. I just got caught up on the Invincible series and started buying the issues. Inoticed that Andrew Lincoln's portrayal of a pre-apocalyptic Rick Grimes was drawn into issue 81. Does he know about this or are you planning to surprise him?

Roscoe E.
Madison, WI

I plead the fifth.

I have NO IDEA what you may be talking about.

Kirkman.
Grace.

im done. i quit. im sick of these repetitive issues were nothing happens. its like a flavor of the month type of thing with these villians, it seems like you're just stalling and i for one hate it. i hope you dont expect me to ever pick up a single copy of invincible again.

thats what i would say if i didnt like this issue.

fourtinatly i loved it.

Well, you really had me going for a second there. Nice.

the action was fantastic, the colors were.....colors, the writing was wonderfull as always, im sure in a dds something in production, and its crimethat ruswootondosn't get mentioned very much because his lettering is great. sometiphoical high fives all around. but that dosent mean it was perfect. (oh great here i go critizing my favorite book, who the hell do i think i am?)

im sure people are gonna write in about this, but why were rick and shane in invincible? and dont say that its just a coincidence. it was them. seriously you TOLD ME that invincible and the walking dead are not in the same multiverse. or something like that. im lazy. but anyways i feel betrayed.

anyways thanks for reading this.

love
dalton

p.s. keep not sucking

Robert, everyone keeps talking about this Rick and Shane thing, can you elaborate?

Huh? I'm still trying to figure out who this Rus Wooton guy is that he mentioned... one mystery at a time, dude.

In Invincibles 81 Sinasaid that Invincible "isn't the home for discussing huge issues." I beg to differ. Woven into Invincible are all kinds of huge issues, but they're seen through the lens of Mark's super world or just mentioned and absorbed into the story as it keeps moving: Omni-Man's dishonest marriage is destroyed and it gives his wife, left alone with a teenager, a drinking problem. Omni-Man murders and betrays a bunch of people, then comes back and his ex-wife and son must find a way to get along with him and be ok with him having another family. That's just part of one guy's story, and I'd say there are a number of huge issues in there. Then there are the issues with the government and the role of a superhero in general, right and wrong, the value of one life against many... oh and there have been human bombstoo. Is an abortion popping up really that much of a surprise? Or that much worse? And it's treated in the same way as every other huge issue in the book- not sensationalized, just a part of life. No moralizing or preaching, just life, which is sometimes really messy and hard.

Both here and at The Walking Dead where The Shot Heard Round The Blogosphere stirred up a similar (if not more intense) crap storm I find it hard to believe that seemingly intelligent readers would really want stories about a bunch of people who do nothing but the right thing all the time, who only have simplistic choices between clearly right and clearly wrong and live in a world where nothing bad happens to them when what has made us love these books is the completeness of the human experience that they

portray. I love these characters just as much as those threatening to quit reading - I completely panicked when I thought Eve had died a while back. But then and now I'll keep reading Kirkman and Co.'s books as long as they continue to challenge and surprise me.

And by the way, the Rick and Shane cameo was beyond delightful.

Stay Huge,
Lisa Olson
St Paul, MN

You totally called me out, Lisa. This book definitely covers hard topics, and Robert's books stand out partially because he is able to explore a lot of larger issues without preaching in any way. My claim was mainly trying to say that Robert doesn't seek out Big Deal topics to exploit the reader's politics. He's not going to do a 9/11-themed issue of Super Dinosaur...

Rick and Shane???

Heh.

In other news, please look forward to our "vote for Ralph Nader" issue.

Kirkman and Co.,

Lots of guest spots this time around... I wonder if Rick and Shane will find Dinosaur lurking around GA? AND MECHAMAID!!!! I don't care that all she did was stand there... I have missed her so much I was actually starting to forget about her (for SHAME!!!!). I do hope we get to see more of the Actioneers moving forward (Powerplex and all), and who knows? Maybe you will find it in your heart to have Mark and Dracula face off one day down the road... I can dream, can't I?

The Astounding Wolf-Man and Dracula would need to face off before then...

Interesting reactions abound for Eve's abortion, which was expected, of course. I understand that people have strong opinions about abortion (and everyone has that right of course) but one fan's letter just didn't jive for me...

Granted, Eve is a FICTIONAL character... but even so, is it really fair to judge based on the whole "when faced with the same situation I did the OPPOSITE" argument? Is adoption REALLY an option for a potentially SUPERPOWERED INFANT? OK, rant over...

Interesting rant/ opinion...

Oh, and Robert... I know you are busy, my friend, but when it comes down to you NOT having time to do anything with these immortal plans of yours, I leave you with this (one of my college professors ALWAYS threw this around)...

"We MAKE time for that which is important to us..."

THAT being said, you already bought some books... the seed is there, sir. WATER IT!

Thanks again y'all, Keep Killing it, Kirkman!!!

Cam Stylez

Wow, the thematic flow of this letter is pretty awesome.

I'll remind Robert about watering that plant, but the nice thing about The Immortal is: he'll always be around!

I just wanna spend time with my kids, bro.

Dear K-man,

I started reading Invincible a week ago and am now ALMOST up to date. So I wrote down any questions I had am now ready to ask them to you. Bear in mind that if you do not publish this letter I'll keep sending it until you do. Not because I want to see it published but more because I really need them answered. I care enough about your work to be persistent like that. Hope you take it as a compliment.

So here! Numbered questions!

1. In many panels since the beginning of your comic there are many Easter eggs, like people from other media (Jay and Silent Bob, Bill & Ted, guy wearing a LOST t-shirt). My question is when you write the script do you tell Ryan to draw them in the background or do Ryan/ Cory draw them on their own?

I don't think you ever instruct Ryan or Cory on the references made on shirts and posters (aside from Science Dog), but what about when people are drawn in the background, Robert?

Almost never me... always the artist adding cool stuff.

2. Are the Viltrumites at all based on Saiyans from the Dragonball manga?

K-Man, what say ye?

Ugh, no. Look, if I was a Dragonball fan, I'd totally cop to it and say "I don't think they're that similar" but I really know next to nothing about that stuff, but I do hear this from time to time. I should research that stuff to see just how similar they are. But the answer is no.

3. The most vulnerable part of Invincible's suit is his eye pieces. Can't his tailor fix that? What is that material anyway?

Tailor is always tweaking, possibly even the eye pieces. I really can't wing these answers...

Then stop trying! The eye pieces... or y'know GOGGLES are my favorite part. Screw being practical.

4. Mark's second costume looks like Dick Grayson's Nightwing one and Oliver's first looks like any Robin's. I assume that is intentional since it's a pretty obvious thing. But Oliver's initial behavior (being extremely violent, ends justify the means stuff etc.) also reminds me of Jason Todd (second Robin). Was that intentional or just a coincidence/happy accident?

Ugh, no Jason Todd reference is a happy accident.

This is all a coincidence... believe it or not. Invincible's blue costume only looks like Nightwing's costume, in that... it's blue and black. They're really quite different. And Oliver's colors were based on McDonald's color scheme--not Robin's (I mean, there's no green!)

5. On Invincible #17 Angstrom Levy explains that one setback to his powers is that he can't move through space, only through different dimensions. Sold on't understand how when he got the shit beat out of him by Mark in that desert-like dimension in Invincible #60 he was able to transport exactly inside the room with the freaky aliens. I mean it looked like a pretty small room. Had he planned to have the fight in that exact spot? I mean it was a desert the fight could have happened anywhere around that particular spot.

Sorry for writing a letter this long but I'm a big fan. Hope this justifies it.

Yiagkos,

Paros
Greece

Thanks for the love from Greece! Keep spreading the word, thus continuing to honor our title of Best Super-hero Comic in the Universe!

On the Angstrom, thing... yes, he planned all that; the location was picked by him. That's how he was able to survive the beating Mark gave him.

Hey guys,

It's been a while since I wrote in but, here I am now. The reason I'm writing/typing is because I am really pissed at you guys, I love the books but this complaint has been buildin' for a while now. So here we go.

So for the past couple of issues now in the letters column fans have obviously asked for more of this, that, whatever, right? And time after time Kirkman's answer was "I'd love to! I just don't have the time!" or something like that. Haunt is getting a new creative team because of this (and y'know, Capullo will be drawing batman which I will definitely buy) BUT, you keep making new series and writing them... Infinite?! Super Dinosaur? You keep making these series and us fans keep falling in love with these characters but then they over before you know it and ya just lock them away. Example???? WOLF-MAN. 25 issue series and a couple of cameos and that's it! No Astounding Wolf-corp series?! Noteven a one shot???? My little brother loves wolf-man and devoured those 4 volumes (he's 9 years old, he friggin' loves wolf man) he's been askin' when there's gonna be more and all I can say "I don't know man, you wanna check this out? It's by the same guys." and no interest, just went back to the ps3. Just cause Bendis/ Maleev did DD doesn't mean I'm gonna love Moon Knight. SCIENCE DOG!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I love Science Dog! You can't sit there and call out Ceren when you do the SAME EXACT thing to your characters! I realize you actually are busy, what with Hollywood and stuff but still, you drop Haunt and take on more projects and just dismiss the ones you're bored with. I don't even want to think how long it'll be before I see El Chupracabra in a story again. But whatever, I don't know how much work goes into the shit or any behind the scenes stuff. So I'll shut the hell up. But now I have a suggestion.

Some of Robert's creations are up for grabs: The Guardians of the Globe, for example. Writers like Benito Cereno have a handle on the characters, and Robert can trust them to take the babies out to the park. Science Dog is one of those books that I think Robert will only work on with Cory, but I could be wrong.

Also, I can do whatever I want! That's the whole point of owning these books. If I want someone else to take over, or if I want to keep things to myself--that's my decision. And writing the comics for exactly as long as I want to is a good thing. And I do new books because I like doing new things! I'm sorry you're not thrilled... but y'know, that's what I do.

The Viltrumite War was amazing. its that simple, it is by far my favorite comic book story line to this day. But #75 took forever to come out, and I know it was an anniversary issue and it was huge and there were what? 4 double page spreads? This brings me to my point. Issue 100 I know will blow us all away. I know you guys got something big planned and I can't wait. But I also know Ottley is gonna have a HUGE workload because of this, so why not do about 5-6 issues of guest pencils. I know you guys got Cory doing 85-87 but why not have guys like James Stokoe, Erik Larsen, Charlie Adlard, Jason Howard, Sina, all the buddies, and have them do one issue each. I know you'd kill to work with your Jesus Christ Erik Larsen so why not? Ottley would have MONTHS to do the monster 100th issue and fans would get to see how some of their other favorite artists do Invincible. You could get McFarlane and Liefeld to do one as well. Just a suggestion. I personally love Orc Stain and would love to see Stokoe do an issue of Invincible, but there hasn't been an issue of Orc stain for the past 6 months or something sooooo yeah, that probably won't happen.

Don't worry, the minute Robert mentioned one of his plans for issue 100, the first thing I thought was: how are we gonna schedule that!? We'll have a good strategy in place for the radness due to ensue.

Also, Cory is visiting us for 85 and 86. Ryan returns with 87.

I do agree with the letter from Heather last month. There does need to be an ongoing Hector Plasm' cause the shit is amazing, it just pissed me off how Kirkman called them out.

I bitch cause I care,
John LaCorazza
North Syracuse, NY

p.s. I started buying the series with issues 71 (part 1 of the Viltrumite War) but I also bought the trade of it and saw in the sketches section that you can get Con sketches while at conventions. I didn't go to SDCC (watched the 4 hour special on AOTS) but I was wondering how much a con sketch would be? thanks.

I think they're something like \$75 to \$100? Prices vary depending on what you're asking for.

p.p.s. back in issue 80 I believe, in the background when Mark goes to get the comics off his pull list, there is a shirt in the background that reads "Gronchless" with an arrow pointing down, yeah, you guys need to make those and add them to the Skybound online store. And what about the science dog? PLEASE tell me that wasn't an SDCC exclusive.

Our Science Dog shirt is a con exclusive, but we'll throw a few up on-line just for you!

Remember folks: SKYBOUND.COM/SHOP let's go shopping!

There are a lot of amazing things you have accomplished with this series, but by far the best thing you have done is make Atom Eve gain weight. Allow me to explain. Now my daughter, sees all types of heroines in comic books that just do not look like her and she has mentioned this many times. After passing on to her recent issues of Invincible, she ran to me and said "Look, Dad! Atom Eve has put on weight! She looks kind of like me!" This seemed to make her happy and opened the door for us both to have great conversations about how Mark still loves Eve, how Eve doesn't care about being thin. how Eve still wears her costume to fight evil....ect, ect. Great self image discussions that help her see that not every heroine has to look like Wonder Women, Black Canary or the rest. All busty, thin waist-ed and photoshop perfect. FINALLY she has a hero that looks like her and is not ashamed about her weight and size.

Now my issue is how long are you willing to keep her this way? Do you cave to pressure by fanboys that need to stare at drawings of Atom Eve and fantasize over her thin persona and change her back? Do you tell readers like my daughter that Eve can only be happy and confident in life when she gets her thin size back? That she is only "fat" due to her missing Mark or her trauma over the baby? Or do you do the positive thing and help the many girls out there like my daughter and show that Eve is fine just the way she is now and can enjoy her life at a bit of the plus size?

I doubt you as creators will leave her in her present state, it just doesn't sell. But I want you to know that when you do ever the other to the thin "perfect" size your publisher will demand, you will be forcing me into a tough conversation with my daughter and probably many other Moms and Dads out there that will have to explain that Eve is better off Thinner or Hotter or sexier. Please don't do that to us. Or don't insult us with a secondary "Fat" character to keep the audience appeased. Eve is a central character and it is important to us (those of us with daughters that read comics) that she stay as is, to show you do not need to be like girls in magazines and on TV to be happy and loved.

Anyway, Thanks for giving girls out there like my daughter the first and best comic book heroic REAL image role model in comics today! For however long you allow it to last.

Happy/Concerned Dad
Gerry

Robert, I leave this entirely in your court.

I really appreciate this letter. The only people that decide if Eve stays in her current shape is myself, Ryan and Cory. If any of us got sick of it... we'd reconsider. But we all dig it--and fan reaction has been largely positive from what I can tell. So Eve will be like this for a while at least.

Hello Kirkman and Sina

Am I right when I say I saw Totoro (you know, the cute Studio Ghibli character from My Neighbour Totoro), in issue # 81 on page 3?

Because that would be absolutely amazing!! I love the Totoro character and always love it, when he makes cameos in different things, like Toy Story 3 and now Invincible.

Oh, and Invincible just keeps getting better and better!

Sincerely
Lasse Knudsen (writing from halfway around the world, from Denmark)

I plead the fifth.

Don't get us sued, Ryan!!

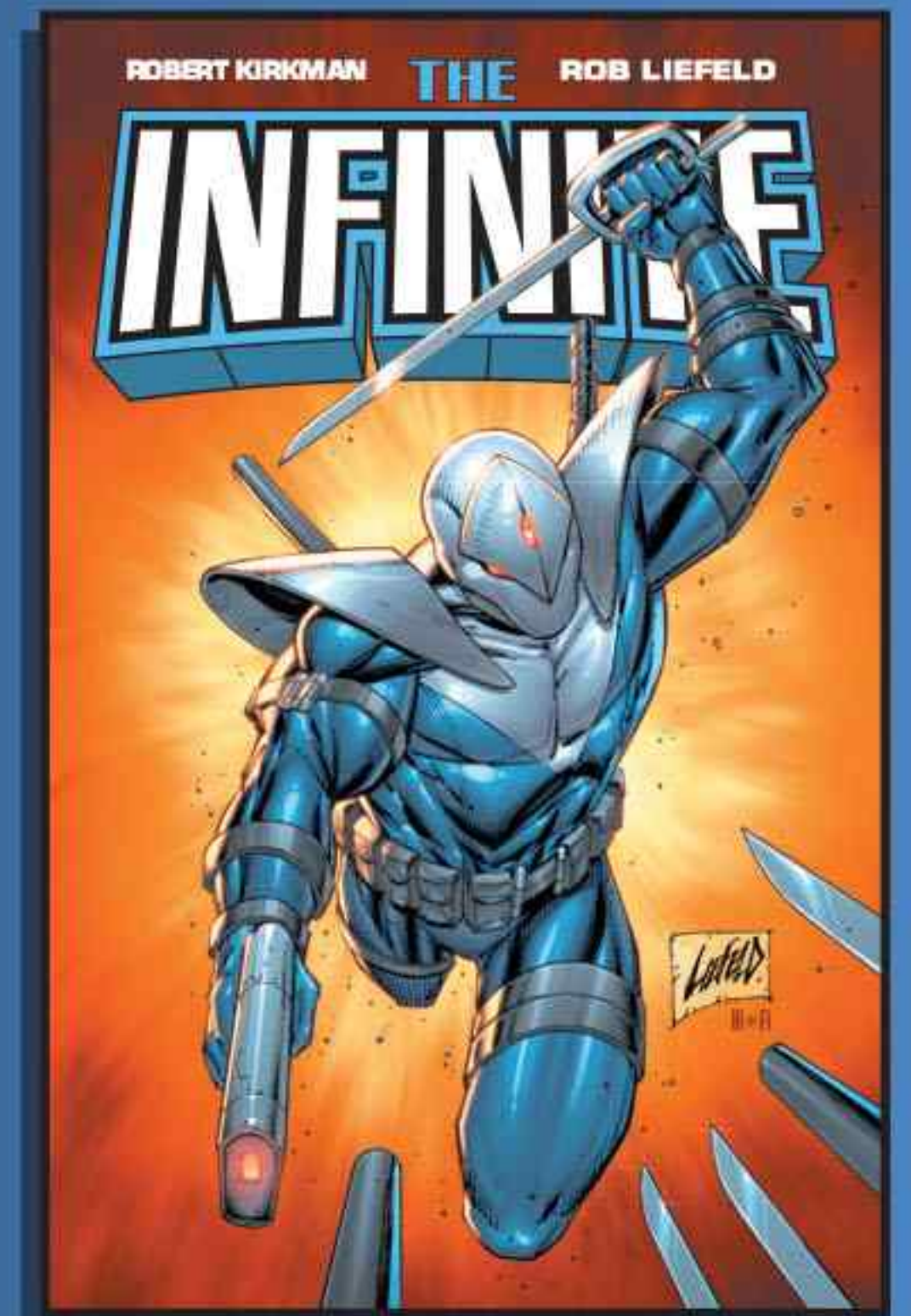
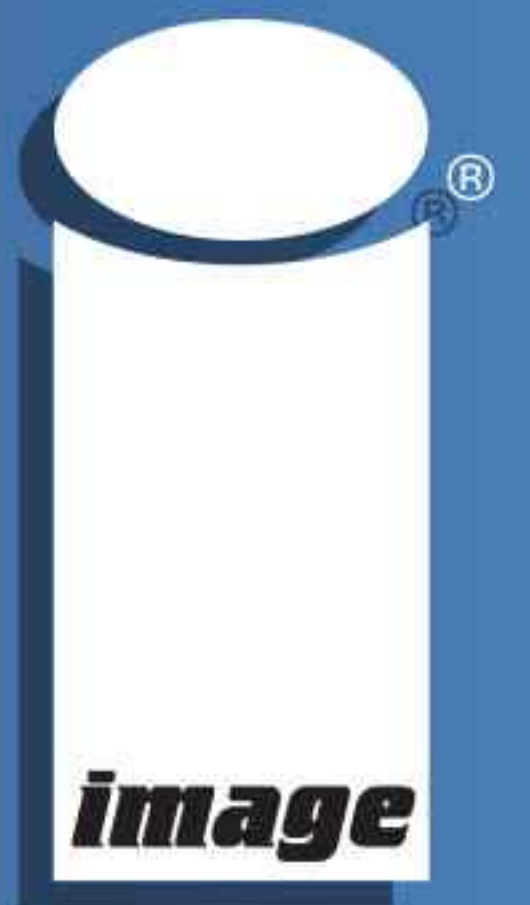
Thanks for reading! See you in a month! And then again just a few weeks after that!

-Sina Grace

What, what?!

-Robert Kirkman

DON'T MISS THE NEXT ISSUE!



THE INFINITE #3
ON SALE NOW



LAST OF THE
GREATS #1
ON SALE NOW



SAVAGEDRAGON#174
ONSALENEXTWEEK



INVINCIBLE #84
ON SALE NOVEMBER 2011

The Third Degree:

JUSTIN JORDAN

IMAGE COMICS' MONTHLY Q&A SESSION

Justin Jordan's work has appeared in more than a dozen comic book anthologies (Hard Words, Kagemano, Strange Consequences), along with being a three time competitor in DC's Zuda competition with Rumors of War, Junk and The Assignment. He lives in the wilds of Pennsylvania where he's occasionally mistaken for a sasquatch. He's not especially confident in his cover letter ability. His bloody new series with artist Tradd Moore, THE STRANGE TALENT OF LUTHER STRODE, debuts October 5th.

What are you working on right now?

Right now, trying to find a colorist for another project. Which is one of the parts of the job I like least, because I don't see color well and it's actually pretty tricky to separate the coloring from the art. I'm lucky to have Felipe kicking buttocks on Luther Strode.

What's the best part of your job?

Well, I get to make stuff up, which I have to admit is pretty awesome. Actually, I wish I were a faster writer so that I could get to my new ideas faster, which is a good problem to have.

What's the worst part of your job?

I don't really like the project management aspect of it. This isn't an issue with Tradd and Felipe on Luther, but harassing people to make deadlines and firing folks, both of which I've had to do this week, are not things that I like to do and I would happily foist them off to someone else should the opportunity arise.

How did you first discover comics?

You know, I'm not entirely sure. I do know that I was into comics before I could read, and I actually learned to read pretty early so that I didn't have to keep dragooning family members into doing it for me.

I suspect I saw comics the first time at the grocery store or the convenience store with my Mom. The first comic book I can remember reading was Popeye.

If you weren't working in comics, what would you be doing?

Writing. Comics doesn't yet pay my bills, so I do freelance writing, mostly for businesses. It's not hugely exciting, but it pays pretty well, and I can work in my pajamas.

What's the strangest thing a fan has ever said to you?

"Man, if he was really dead I was going to punch you!"

He was kidding. Probably.

What are you most likely to complain to an editor about?

You know, I've yet to work with an editor in comics, so I have no idea. The only thing I can think of is if I weren't getting paid on time, or worse, the artist wasn't getting paid on time. I'm pretty easy going otherwise.

Who is the biggest influence on your work?

That's a tough question. I can see a bunch of different people from a bunch of different mediums in my stuff, and it changes from project to project. Looking at Luther Strode now, for instance, when I've been done for a few months, I can see some Quentin Tarantino, Elmore Leonard and Joss Whedon in it.

Oddly enough, there's a lot of Elmore Leonard and Robert Parker in my writing. I tend towards short, punchy dialogue and there are big stretches where the action is telling the story and I suspect it's because of them.

What is the single work of which you're most proud?

THE STRANGE TALENT OF LUTHER STRODE. Hands down. I realize I've mentioned it a few times already, but it's the best thing I've ever done. It's not perfect, but rereading it, there's nothing in that I could have done better than I did it, which is pretty damn rare for an insecure writer type.

Own up to one of your guilty pleasures.

Just one? I watch a ridiculous amount of the show *American Greed*, which is mostly about frauds and cons and is narrated by Stacy Keach. This probably wouldn't qualify as a guilty pleasure except that I probably watch four hours of it a week. That can't be healthy.

What was the last comic book you bought?

I bought a *Scalped* trade off Jason Aaron in Baltimore, I think. I haven't had time to make it to the shop since then.

Who would play you in a movie about your life?

Well I'm tall, hairy and massive, so probably Sweetums from *The Muppets*.

Pick three things you couldn't live without.

Diet Pepsi, the Internet and my car.

The Diet Pepsi is because I am a terrible, pathetic caffeine junky, and I'm too lazy to make coffee that often. The car and the Internet are because I live waaaaay the hell out in the middle of nowhere and they make me feel halfway connected to the actual world.

What's the strangest thing you have in your house?

Now, here's a question that will make me sound terribly boring. I need a stuffed snake to worship or something. Um...I have a bobcat skull I found when I was a kid? So that?

When was the last time you laughed out loud?

About five minutes ago. What can I say, I'm jolly.

What music are you listening to these days?

I'm not a big music guy, so it's usually whatever is on the radio. Like practically everyone else, I've really been enjoying Adele's new album. The new Foo Fighters is good for the gym, and I'm looking forward to the new Red Hot Chili Peppers album. Because I'm old, apparently.

What is your favorite film of all time?

This is one of those questions where the answer is going to change depending on what I've seen most recently. I find myself enjoying *Alien*, *Pulp Fiction* and *Bladerunner* more every time I watch them, which apparently means that if Tarantino and Scott ever team up my head will explode from the glee.

Who is your best friend?

I've had the same best friend since high school and we've managed to stay pretty close despite him having three (soon to be four) kids and living mostly thousands of miles away.

What is the worst advice you've ever received?

Take some time off before you go to college and work for a while. I didn't, but it would have been bad advice for me and I'm glad I didn't take it. College was great fun and exactly what I needed to be doing when I did it.

When was the last time you were truly frightened?

I did walk into my bathroom one night to be greeted by a spider the size of my hand, which caused me to leap backwards out of the bathroom, which is, I'm pretty sure, the only time I've ever leaped back from anything.

I'm arachnophobic, so it's was more than just being startled. I killed the heck of that spider and hung his body outside as a warning to the others, in case you were wondering.

Name someone you really admire and explain why.

I really admire what Warren Ellis has done, working in a whole bunch of genres within comics and trying new stuff with the form. I can't say how much he's influenced, although I'm sure he has, but I'd certainly love to have this career. Likewise, Jonathan Hickman, for essentially the same reasons.

What would you like to see happen in comics in the next 12 months?

More readers. There are some great comics selling five or six thousand copies, which is ridiculous. I could probably find ten thousand people who have fetish for watching Tibetan midgets dance in refrigerator boxes, so there's no excuse for comics to be selling that little. There are a lot of people who would enjoy comics who never really read them, so I think we can reverse the downward trend.

What the world needs now is...

...love. Possibly from Tibetan midgets.



the  word

IMAGE COMICS, INC.
2134 Allston Way, 2nd Floor,
Berkeley, CA 94704.

Image Comics® and its logos are registered
trademarks of Image Comics, Inc.

Question of the Month

If you could work
with any one creator
on a new comic,
who would it be?

"I don't know. Do you think Alan Moore
reads these things?"

Dan Brereton
THE LAST BATTLE

"Warren Ellis -- he's a disturbing mad
man. I'd like to work one more time with
Alexandro Jodorowsky. Dean Yeagle.
Mike Mignola. Guillermo del Toro. Harlan
Ellison. Syd Mead. You see, I'm really easy
to please..."

Axel Medellin
GIANTMEN

"I'd love to do a fully-realized mini-series
(at least) for Image with anyone I've
already worked with on a short story
in any of the first three NIGHTMARE
WORLD TP collections."

Dirk Manning
NIGHTMARE WORLD

"Outside of my current awesome
collaborator, I would say Warren Ellis.
His ideas are so creative and he creates
amazing characters and worlds."

Jason Howard
SUPER SINGULAR

"There are too many great creators to
pick just one. I've loved Phil Noto since
INFINITE HORIZON and I'm constantly
inspired by his work on Tumblr. I'd also
love to work with Viktor Kalvachev.
BLUE ESTATE shows he's not only doing
the best covers in the business, but that
he's truly brilliant at blending so many
creators' visions."

Mark Sable
CRIMINAL MINDS: FEARLESS

For the latest Image Comics news and previews, visit www.imagecomics.com >>>